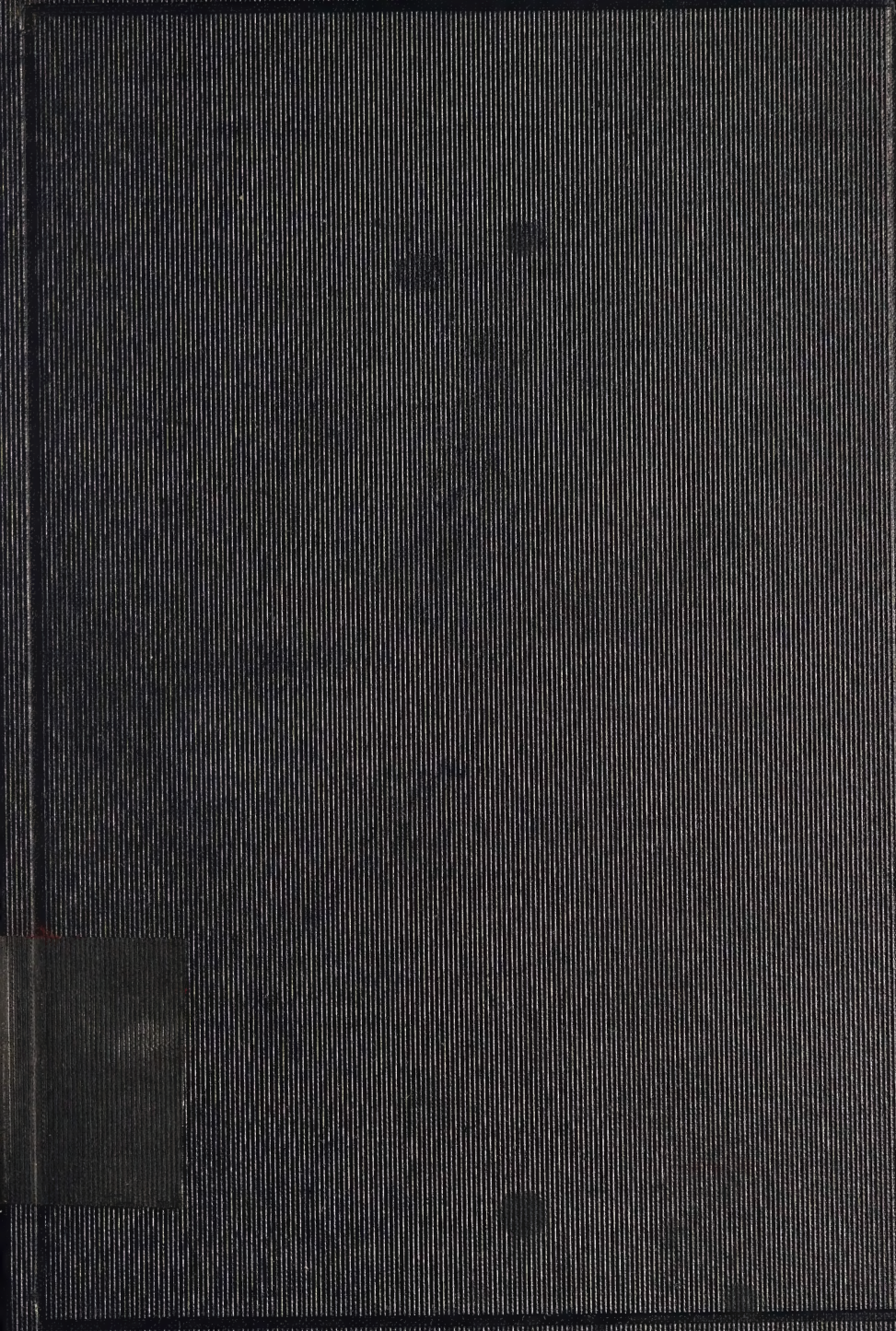
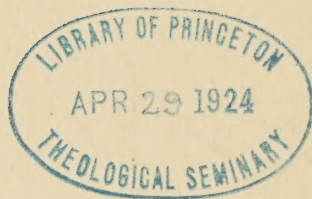




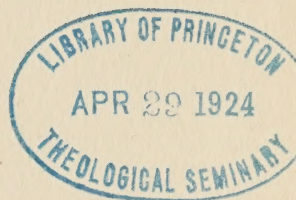


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Religious certitude in an
age of science

RELIGIOUS CERTITUDE
IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE

RELIGIOUS CERTITUDE IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE

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THE McNAIR LECTURES, 1922,
DELIVERED AT THE UNIVER-
SITY OF NORTH CAROLINA



BY
✓
CHARLES ALLEN DINSMORE
PROFESSOR OF SPIRITUAL INTERPRETATION
OF LITERATURE IN THE YALE
DIVINITY SCHOOL

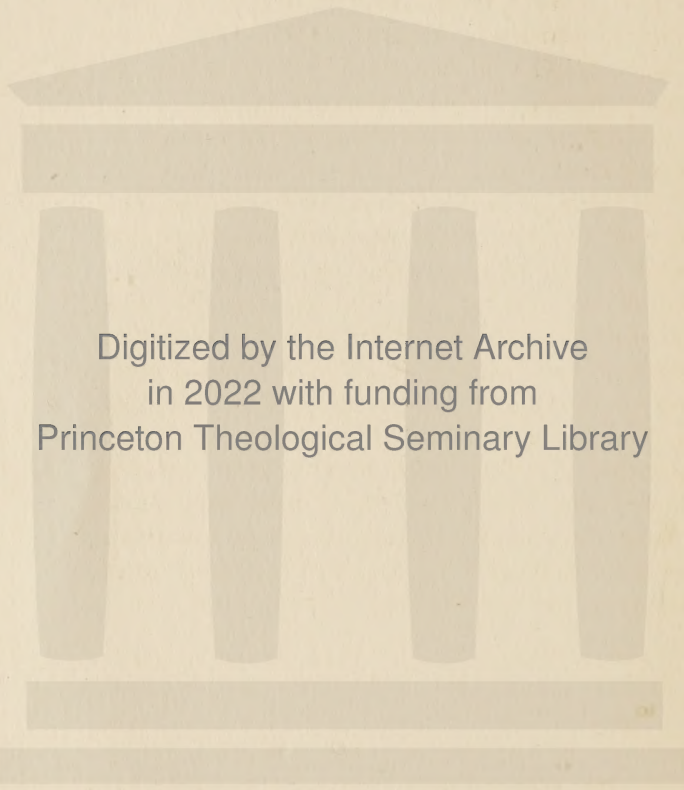


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THE McNAIR LECTURES

The John Calvin McNair Lectures were founded through a bequest made by Rev. John Calvin McNair of the class of '1849 which became available to the University in 1906. The extract from the will referring to the foundation is as follows:

"As soon as the interest accruing thereon shall by said Trustees be deemed sufficient they shall employ some able scientific gentleman to deliver before the students then in attendance at said University, a course of lectures, the object of which lectures shall be to show the mutual bearing of science and theology upon each other, and to prove the existence of attributes (as far as may be) of God from nature. The lectures, which must be prepared by a member of some one of the evangelic denominations of christians, must be published within twelve months after delivery, either in pamphlet or book form."

PREFACE

The lectures in this little volume were delivered before the University of North Carolina in the spring of 1922. As the purpose of the lectureship is to help the students in their religious thinking I had them constantly in mind during the preparation of these addresses. As the attendance is voluntary, I was beset with the dread of being so uninteresting as to lose both their attention and their presence. Therefore I aimed at simplicity, brevity and popular statement. Refinements in definition and subtle reasoning give little satisfaction to empty seats. In revising the addresses for publication I have rewritten a few pages in the interest of clarity, but otherwise have left them unchanged.

The reader may feel that in chapter three I have been unduly solicitous re-

garding the word "knowledge," but I believe this word and the confidence it brings belong properly to religion. One does not wish to commit his life to a Grand Perhaps. If we have any intelligible purpose for existing in this world, it is that we may build up virtuous characters, that we achieve the fullest possible development of our personalities. But one cannot erect a house or a character on fog, neither can he live spiritually in a vacuum. The foundations must be solid if the superstructure is to be substantial and enduring. If religion is to transform the characters of men, she must deal in certainties as well as in noble faiths. It cannot be that we have less assurance about what concerns us most than about matters of minor importance; that we can find our way so readily in the physical world to lose it when we pass the boundary line into the spiritual. Our conceptions doubtless change with increasing culture, but in our deepest experiences we have real knowledge of the Unchangeable.

It has always seemed to me that a man should be willing to face the actualities of life; that he should be eager to know the truth regardless of the effect on his theories. It is foolish to cherish a delusion because it is pleasant. Therefore the spirit of dogmatism, both in science and religion, has been abhorrent to me. "No one of us is infallible," said Benjamin Jowett, "not even the youngest!" And I have felt that the religious man could show his faith in God in no better way than by welcoming the truth given in every department of research. The Holy Ghost is the spirit of truth, and in this age, I am sure, our best scientific minds are his anointed prophets and are manifesting his spirit and revealing his ways more truly than many of our statesmen or theologians. They are also restoring to us the lost gift of wonder.

But too many scientific men claim the word "knowledge" as their peculiar possession and grant to the bewildered spirit

of man only the satisfactions of conjecture. In these pages I claim the word for religion.

CHARLES ALLEN DINSMORE.

YALE UNIVERSITY.

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RELIGIOUS CERTITUDE
IN AN AGE OF SCIENCE

PROLOGUE

The honor of delivering this course of lectures I sincerely appreciate, and I can show my gratitude no more genuinely than by adhering closely to the purpose of the founder. The foundation was the gift of Mr. John Calvin McNair, a graduate of this University of the class of 1849. His surname indicates that he sprang from that sturdy Scotch-Irish stock whose far-sighted patriotism and intense interest in education gave North Carolina the honor of establishing this the first university created in this country by legislative enactment. His Christian name, John Calvin, attests the stern piety of his ancestors. One born of such blood and traditions would perforce be dedicated from birth both to religion and the concerns of the mind. Calvinism was an iron system of far ranging and closely articulated logic, centered around a majestic vision of

a Sovereign Almighty Will, and wherever that mighty creed cast its gloom and its glory there sprang up strong men consecrated to truth and liberty.

As Mr. McNair graduated in 1849, he was in the fulness of his intellectual vigor in 1859 when Darwin published his epoch-making book on the *Origin of Species*. That volume kindled a fierce controversy which was carried into every hamlet in Christendom, and caused every thinking man to examine the foundations of his creed. A vigorous, militant Orthodoxy unhesitatingly joined issue with a science so revolutionary. A graduate of this University, bearing such a name and having in his blood a strain which carries with it an inherent faith in a sovereign God, could have been no indifferent spectator of the earnest debate; the battle between the tradition of his fathers and the new affirmations must have been waged with intense energy in his own soul. I surmise that during his mature years it was a very vital problem with him how to be loyal to

the faith of his fathers, and yet be open-minded to whatever truths science had to teach. Doubtless he settled for himself and to his own satisfaction the relationship between the ancient creed and the new spirit abroad in the world. And I imagine that out of those years of intellectual struggle grew the purpose of this lectureship; namely, that the young men of this institution might, for generations to come, receive some help when they too should meet the same essential problem. For this debate between Science and Religion will go on to the end of time. It is more than a struggle between two rival systems of thought; it is the adjustment of two distinct tempers of mind. The conflict goes even deeper. It has its origin in the very nature of man himself. It is a debate between the critical intellect and that inner spirit which would fain believe and aspire and rest. It begins when the boy in college feels the incompatibility between his new knowledge and his boyhood notions which he invariably con-

fuses with the faith of the Church, and it revives whenever the things which are seen appear at variance with the things which are unseen—whenever the critical understanding questions the needs of the heart and the intuitions of the spirit.

As stated by the founder, the purpose of this lectureship is “to show the mutual bearing of science and theology upon each other and to prove the existence of attributes (as far as may be) of God from Nature.” To draw from the material universe proofs of the existence of God, or indications of his nature, is a task quite alien to my abilities. Every shoemaker should stick to his last. Only one who has spent a lifetime in scientific research is capable of speaking with any semblance of authority on such a subject. Only he can have first hand knowledge of established facts and of their legitimate implications. It requires prolonged and diligent study in any department to form a dependable judgment upon the value and meaning of its data. Broadly speaking,

there are two fields of intellectual interest: Man and his experiences, and Nature and her processes. There is no more insidious and dangerous temptation than for one who has spent his life in one of these departments of thought to venture into the other department for the purpose of passing judgment upon its facts and conclusions. It is a sad sight to see a physicist come out of his laboratory, with the standards and habits which befit his work, and go up onto that high tableland where the spirit struggles with its mighty problems of destiny, to pass pontifical judgments which only reveal his own limitations. On the other hand the scientist can suffer no more exquisite torture than to hear a theologian, who evidently knows nothing of the care needed to establish even the simplest fact, make sweeping generalizations.

Happily from any such exhibition of ignorant presumption you will, I trust, be spared. Upon one phase of the first statement in the will—the mutual bearing of science and religion—I am, perhaps, not

entirely incompetent to speak. I have therefore chosen for the theme of this and the two succeeding lectures the theme, *Religious Certitude in an Age of Science*. Tonight I shall offer some reflections on the Influence of Science on Modern Religious Thought. Tomorrow night the topic will be, The Nature and Truth of Religion. The closing lecture will consider What We Know and What We Believe.

Let me state at the outset that I shall not attempt an intricate argument, clothed in unfamiliar words, addressed to the trained minds of experts, to establish some theory of knowledge. The purpose of this foundation, as I understand it, is to persuade the students of the University that they may be unfeignedly loyal to truth in whatever department of research it may be discovered, and at the same time possess the strength and consolation of religion.

I am too well aware that I shall satisfy neither the dogmatists of science, nor of religion. The dogmatist is seldom open to

argument. Dogmatism, as has been well said, is puppyism grown old. The religious dogmatist is a familiar figure. His iron creed will never open to receive new truth, and the pain of a new idea is intolerable. But religion has no monopoly of this spirit. The narrowest, the most opinionated, the most supercilious persons one finds in our seats of learning are the little scientists, who have sunk so deep into their constricted specialty that they cannot see beyond its confines. They burrow so long in their little mole-runs that their eyes grow dim: they lose all sense of the vastness of the universe; they think the cackle of their laboratory is the murmur of the world. They measure all life with the instruments of their trade. They mistake their generalizations for the philosophy of the universe. A witty writer has recently described those specialists whose minds have become so ossified that they miss the beauty and significance of the world:

“A primrose by the river’s brim
Primula flava was to him,
And it was nothing more.”

From the closed mind and the intolerant
spirit may we be delivered.

THE INFLUENCE OF SCIENCE ON
MODERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

CHAPTER I

THE INFLUENCE OF SCIENCE ON MODERN RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

Let us first ask: What is science? In the popular sense—the sense in which it is used in Mr. McNair's will—the term science refers to the methods and the results of the Natural Sciences. It is that body of knowledge made up of verified and verifiable facts and their relationships which pertain to Nature and her processes, and to Man insofar as he is immersed in the physical order. It is "systematized knowledge of sense phenomena."

In a larger sense science is all verified and organized knowledge. In this ampler meaning it would include all the activities of religion which report themselves in the current of affairs. But we shall employ the word throughout these lectures in the narrower and popular significance.

We are certainly living in a period that is preëminently an Age of Science. It is said that there have been more scientific discoveries in the past hundred years than in all preceding centuries. Yet the most precious gift of science to the world has not been her marvelous inventions, her amazing discoveries; her supreme bestowment has been the purpose, the spirit, and the method she has introduced into our thinking.

Her purpose is definite. She aims at nothing less than a mastery over nature by the discovery of its laws. In this she has met with such extraordinary success that there has been born into the world an inextinguishable hope that one by one the old enemies of our race—pestilence, poverty, superstition—will be overcome, and that the conditions of existence will be more tolerable.

She expects to achieve her dominion over the forces of nature by a definite procedure; i.e., by discovering and verifying facts and setting them in their proper re-

lationships. Then the technical arts will take the discovered facts and laws and put them to the service of man. The precise methods of science differ according to the field of investigation. But in every department she uses those "methods which are established in the confidence of men whose occupation it is to investigate truth."

Yet the supreme contribution of science has not been her results or her method, but her spirit. I know of no finer statement of this spirit than in Huxley's memorable letter to Kingsley: "Sit down before a fact as a little child, be prepared to give up every preconceived notion, follow humbly wherever and to whatever abysses nature leads, or you shall learn nothing. I have only begun to learn content and peace of mind since I resolved at all risks to do this." The predominant trait of Huxley's mind has been described as "a passion for veracity." Absolute open-mindedness, the utter elimination in every investigation of all motives save love of

truth, the subordination of all personal preferences and dislikes that might weigh in the balance, this is the scientific spirit. How similar it is to the religious spirit is apparent. Both demand complete self-surrender as indispensable to success; both require the receptiveness of a little child; both command their servitors to subordinate all material advantage to the higher interests; both enjoin utter mental integrity; together they seek to control the world for the sake of humanity.

The rewards also are similar. Working in this spirit of complete consecration to truth, the genuinely scientific mind attains a conviction of the order, the justice, the vastness of the universe, which in moments of supreme discovery, changes into an ecstasy that is akin to the mystic's vision of God. Witness Newton's rapture as he approached the end of his calculations which were to demonstrate the law of gravitation, or Darwin's exaltation of mind as he saw the verification of his theory of development through natural

selection. A scientist, with a mind plodding and dry-as-dust because no light of the imagination streams through it, may be a thorough going materialist, but if to a clear understanding he adds wonder and reverence, his spirit is truly religious, and in his great moments he is not a stranger to that experience which the church calls the baptism of the Holy Ghost. For what is the Holy Ghost but the spirit of all truth?

Working according to methods established in the confidence of competent men, science obtains a body of verified facts and laws which we call knowledge. But it is knowledge with very definite limitations. Science describes, she does not interpret. She deals with phenomena and processes, not with ultimate realities. "I went into my garden," says an Eastern story, "to water the flowers, the drops became a rill, the rill a brook, the brook a river, and the river emptied into the sea." Science follows the drop through all its courses to the ocean, but when it enters

the Infinite and the Eternal she stops. She knows nothing of entities, or efficient causes, or of ultimate destinies. She does not claim to interpret values and the meaning of life.

Let us glance at the influence exercised by science upon our religious thinking. It has been exerted first through the *results* she has established, and second, through the *spirit* she has introduced.

Modern science began her revolutionary influence upon religious thought when in 1543 Copernicus published his epoch-making book. Before his day men believed that they lived in a very complete and snug little universe. The earth was the centre, nine heavens revolved about it, above the stars was heaven and in the caverns of the earth was hell. Human history was confined to some six thousand years, and a complete system of salvation had been revealed from heaven by means of which the elect would fill the vacancies created by the fallen angels. Since the days of Copernicus we have found that

we are living in a universe inconceivably extended in space. Our thoughts are lost in the immensities of distance and magnitude reported by the astronomers.

This extension in space has been matched by an equally astonishing extension in time. The Creator has left a record of his activities in the rocks and in the stars which compels all informed minds to relinquish the venerable chronology which asserts that only six thousand years have elapsed since creation. It is conjectured that it was between forty and twenty-five thousand years ago that a creature akin to us appeared upon the planet. Before the earth was fitted to be his habitation untold ages rolled by. The estimates of the age of the earth vary from one billion six hundred million to Lord Kelvin's guess of four hundred thousand years. As time is reckoned, man is a modern upon the earth, for it is only some nine thousand years ago that a crude civilization appeared in Mesopotamia. This amazing expansion in space and time of

the little universe of our fathers completely shattered the contracted and closed system of theology which so perfectly conformed to it. The vastness of the material universe has given us a glimpse of the greatness of our God. We can no longer think of him as an Emperor enthroned above his universe. He is the indwelling spirit—a Being present in every point of his creation—transcendent only in the sense that he stands outside of our wills.

Neither can we well think of him as the First Cause—for the law of continuity denies the validity of the conception of a beginning. God is first in the sense of being Supreme; first in importance. It is impossible to conceive of a condition when there was God, but no universe. We must think of the universe as always the living garment of an eternal God—who is the ground of all being, in whom all things subsist.

But science has done something more than carry our thought to the rim of the outermost star; she has penetrated the in-

finitely little, and discovered the Great Artificer, toiling busily in the workshop of the living cell with a display of wisdom as elaborate as he manifests in the largest planet. He is in the infinitely small as well as in the infinitely large—the ever-present God.

“Closer is he than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet.”

We Worship a Being:

“Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit that impels
All thinking beings, all objects of all thoughts,
And rolls through all things.”

Our view of humanity has also radically changed. We are not, as our fathers thought, a race debased, creatures fallen from primitive excellence. Rather we are growing beings—we are the result of an ascent inconceivably long. But the summit has not yet been reached. We glimpse a wonderful future before us. Around us and within we are aware of an immense treasure house of unreleased energies, and

the marvelous achievements of the past lead us to believe that, if we can learn to control ourselves as thoroughly as we are controlling nature, the time may come when "beings who are now latent in our thoughts and hidden in our loins shall stand upon this earth, as one stands upon a foot-stool, and shall laugh and reach out their hands to the stars." The astounding discoveries of science, I think, are the direct cause of the inexpugnable conviction that has recently taken possession of our thinking, namely that man is a progressive being. Nothing seems impossible. The Great War has, probably, somewhat rudely shaken this belief. Yet neither in Jerusalem, nor in Athens, nor in the world up to our own time, was there any such assurance of the latent possibility of mankind for advancement, or any such conviction of his ability to control the forces of nature.

The spirit of science working upon the documents of our faith has given us a new Bible, immeasurably more human, signifi-

cant and real than that which the first settlers brought to these shores. In no irreverent spirit, but actuated by the most earnest desire to find out the truth, the most competent men in historical research—and they are earnestly Christian men—tell us that the former theory of plenary inspiration of the Scriptures is no longer tenable. These scholars find that God has not left himself without a witness among any people, but to the Jews he gave a special insight into the things of the spirit. Their great men were not generals or philosophers, but prophets. They interpreted God through nature indeed, but preëminently through the moral and spiritual nature of man. They conceived of an ethical Deity, a righteous and merciful God, Lord of the whole earth, who was using the nations in the interest of a redeemed humanity. The Bible is the record of the growing insight, and the accumulated experiences with the Eternal, of a uniquely endowed people. The Koran gives the point of view of one man,

occupying a moment only in the process of history. The Analects of Confucius give the moral judgments of a single genius, at a definite period of time. The sacred books of India and Persia contain much noble philosophy and many penetrating intuitions of rare value. But the Bible is the only sacred book in the world that represents a righteous God working through long periods of history for the moral redemption of mankind. It is a drama as complete in its plot as Hamlet—but it is the only drama which reveals God as the chief actor in human history carrying forward a supreme work of redemption. “This people,” said Matthew Arnold, writing of the Jews, “have a secret. They discerned the way the world was going, and therefore they have prevailed.” The secret they possessed was that the Everlasting is righteous and that national well-being and individual salvation depend upon conformity to a Power that makes for righteousness. The Bible is every man’s book because it keeps close to hu-

man life and tells of experiences of many generations of men with God.

It has a human element, for it is a story of man's growing knowledge, his insight, his aspirations, and his faith. It is a divine book, because all human experiences are judged in their relationship to God, and God is declared to be acting in individual hearts and in the processes of history for man's well-being.

Our fathers interpreted the Bible in much the same manner which a lawyer uses in interpreting the statutes of North Carolina. It was all an exact statement of fact and truth, and was to be so understood. The King James version was printed as prose, and it was not until a hundred years later that it was discovered that the psalms were poetry both in form and spirit. It has also been ascertained that the Hebrews, like all ancient people, conceived and stated truths in forms of the imagination. Therefore we have in their literature fable, parable, legend, the traditions which mothers told to their

children at eventide, the proverbs of their wise men, the songs of warriors, the allegories, the idyls, the stories by which literary men enforced important truths. The discovery that the Bible is a library of many volumes, of many different types of literature, has led scholars to interpret the different books by their appropriate canon. Consequently we know much more accurately than did the men of a few generations ago precisely how God dealt with this people.

The Bible will never be out of date for four reasons. First, it is a record of the way in which man grew into his conceptions of the true attitude toward God and toward his fellow. Religion is the relationship of man with the Deity, and the true relationship is that of sonship expressed in human service. This relationship once discovered and stated, there can be no further discovery in that line.

Secondly, there are certain ultimates in religion which never can be superceded. In music we have the eight notes. These

having been established, all musical advance is in new combinations of the basic tones. In mathematics the multiplication table will never be improved, neither will the point, or the line, or the circle. The ~~seven~~³ colors will never become out of date, but there will be many new arrangements of them. These ultimates in music, mathematics, painting, having once been found, are of permanent, unchanging value. All progress lies in using them with better understanding and in fresh combinations. So with religion. Faith, hope, and love are ultimates. We may grow into profounder conceptions of their meaning, we shall learn to apply them more wisely, but they are as truly ultimate factors in life as the point and the circle in art. They cannot be diminished or superceded; they are the essence of religion. There is nothing further in that direction. Having learned his true relationship to God and his fellow men, and the abiding and sovereign dispositions of the spirit which make for salvation from the love of sin and the

dominion of fear, has not man reached an unchanging stratum in religion? To this can anything be added?

Yes, there is one more possible disclosure. Let faith, hope and love find a perfect expression in a human being who lives his days as a true son of the Highest, and a genuine brother to humanity; let the ultimates of religion become flesh and blood in some Son of God and Son of Man, and something has come into history which can never be ignored or out of date.

Thirdly, the Bible is a collection of the original documents which describe the process by which the religious ultimates became permanent in the world. It shows the expanding spirit of man gradually throwing off the bondage of fear and superstition, and with ever increasing wonder laying hold of the increasing revelation of truth. It contains the records which witness to a perfect life, a life incarnating all the truths and forces of religion. Now the original documents of an epochal movement never lose their value.

Another reason may be mentioned why the Bible will not be superceded. The book is much more than a collection of historical documents describing the process by which the final truths of our faith came into the world. It is literature, and parts of it are literature of the very highest order. Now great literature comes down through the centuries in ageless youth because it radiates spiritual power. You will recall De Quincey's distinction between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. The distinction is interesting, but in fact there is no literature dealing simply with knowledge. No book becomes literature until its truths stir the emotions, the fountains of power. Books containing information merely do not endure, for having acquired the facts, we throw the book away. Books live, not for the knowledge they contain, but for the moods they induce. The eternal volumes are those which lift us into the timeless world by the exalted moods they create in us. To attain the mood we must read the

book. Preëminently is this true of the Bible. Its writers were men of spiritual genius profoundly moved by the very spirit of the truth of which they wrote; they were aquiver with moral passion. The word of God was on their lips and his spirit was in their hearts. To attain the gospel moods there is no better way than to read the gospel books. Here we find the power to become sons of God, the strongest inducements to love our fellow men and to hope for a glorious future. The final truths of religion cannot be stated with more beauty, simplicity and spiritual power than they are stated in the noblest passages of the Old and New Testaments. Supreme truths, fashioned in forms of perfect beauty, are not forgotten. They have that kind of fire in them which the world will not let die.

The second method by which science has influenced religious thought is through the introduction of the scientific spirit and the scientific method into theology. Let us bear in mind that theology

is ever to be distinguished from religion, as botany is distinct from flowers. Theology is our theory of religion, as botany is the science of flowers.

The theologies of the past have been discarded one by one, not through lack of logical articulation, but because these mighty structures were reared upon shaky premises. Discredit the major premise and the superstructure collapses. Grown wise by the experience of the past, and thoroughly imbued with the scientific spirit, our leading thinkers in the religious world do not assume some broad generalization, such as the Fall of Man, or the sovereign decrees of the Almighty, upon which to build imposing systems of thought. On the contrary, they are keeping very close to facts of human experience; they deal almost exclusively with the near end of truth. And while undoubtedly their interpretations of the facts and truths may change with advancing knowledge, the foundations are secure. Their appeal is not to dogma, but to life.

Let me say, in conclusion, that the Age of Science has also been an age of unprecedented religious activities. When science made her tremendous affirmation that there had been no break in the creative process from the nebula up to man, there were not lacking religious leaders who hailed this ampler interpretation of the orderly ways of the Creator with enthusiasm. "This law of growth," said one of the most distinguished preachers in America, "is what Paul and I have been looking for for some time." Christian scholars at once applied this theory of development to the documents and to the institutions of their faith, with the result that never since primitive Christianity have there been so many spiritually minded people free from the trammels of dogmatism, and so possessed of the essential spirit of all true religion. The new freedom, the new sense of reality, the broader outlook gave immense impulse to religious activities. Never has the Church been nearer the heart of the faith, never

has it worked more wisely or more extensively for the establishment of the Kingdom of God upon the earth.

The witty divine, Sidney Smith, walking one day through the streets of London, heard two women quarreling. Each was in her own house, and the houses were on opposite sides of the street. "Those two women will never agree," remarked the wit, "for they occupy different premises." In former days when religion dwelt in a gloomy tenement of uncharitable dogmatism, and science lived in a new and somewhat shaky house across the way, they did shout invectives at each other. But that time is passing. There are common premises upon which they can live together in peace, with science on the ground floor and religion in the upper story—science keeping the premises in good order and religion supplying the motive and the home atmosphere.

The common house is the spirit of man. Man is the reconciliation of science and religion. Science shows him the laws of

the world in which he lives and which he must obey. But above this order of time and sense there is another world of values and spiritual forces which he knows as truly as he knows the temporal order. Here he finds an interpretation of the meaning of the life, a refuge in times of distress, lofty motives which hold him true to his ideals, and power pouring into his being from the reservoirs of the Unseen.

All scientific minds of the first rank are religious in their purpose of utter loyalty to the truth, and in their emotion of wonder, reverence and humility, and many of them have possessed to the full the consolation and the strength which a spiritual vision of man and the universe gives.

It is a long and brilliant roll from Newton, who wrote an appendix to his *Principia* expressing his faith in God, whose works he had profoundly studied, to Pasteur who wrote:

“There are two men in each of us; the scientist, he who desires to rise to the knowledge of nature through observation,

experiment and reasoning; and the man of feeling, of belief; the man who mourns his dead children and who cannot prove that he will see them again, but who believes that he will, and lives in that hope—The two domains are distinct and woe to him who tries to let them trespass on each other.”

There is only one attitude for a religious man to take in this age of science. Let him not stand with closed mind and closed fist in front of the venerable theories and systems of the fathers, determined to defend them to the last breath. Rather let him remember that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth, and that he works wondrously in every age. His glory shines not only from the pages of the Old and the New Testament, but also from the Oldest Testament written by the finger of frost and fire in the rocks, and from the Newest Testament as he discloses his nature and purposes through the minds of saints and seers who have lived since the canon of the Scriptures

closed. If we believe in the Holy Ghost, we must believe that more of his light will ever break from every Testament. All light comes from one source and harmonizes with itself; let us receive it with gladness.

No one believes more profoundly than I do in the faith once delivered to the saints. It has been handed down from generation to generation by a glorious succession of redeemed men and women. The essentials of that faith can be realized in experience and cannot be overthrown. But these unchanging truths are interpreted in every age according to the language and point of view of that period. Therefore the forms of religious philosophy are constantly being modified, yet the substance changes not.

“Our little systems have their day
They have their day and cease to be.”

Science will greatly modify our theories and speculations, she can never disturb the deeper interests of the soul. Man is

incurably religious. He is a little creature living in a universe terrible in its vastness and in its power. He asks great questions. He cannot be persuaded that they will remain unanswered. He will never believe that he has light to find his way amid the things that are temporal, only to lose it amid the things eternal. Confidently he will ever hold that the light within him, and in the spiritual geniuses of history, is the true light, given for safe guidance.

The tragedy of history has been that the church has so often mistaken the temporary form of her faith for the eternal substance. She has neglected her gospel of love in her fierce zeal for dogma.

Let us also never forget that priests and theologians and laymen cannot pass judgment on the seasoned conclusions of science. Only those are competent to form opinions upon the facts and laws of any department of learning who have made the verification of its truth their occupation. The rest of us must accept the testimony of the competent.

But no changes in our astronomy will put out the stars, and no advance in scientific knowledge will ever extinguish the lights of the spirit by which man has always and must ever live.

“As for knowledge” says Euripides,” I bear her no grudge. I take joy in the pursuit of her. But the other things are great and shining.”

THE NATURE AND TRUTH OF
RELIGION

CHAPTER II

THE NATURE AND TRUTH OF RELIGION

In front of the Art Museum in Boston is a bronze statute of extreme beauty and suggestiveness. It is the figure of an Indian seated upon his pony, stretching out hands in prayer and adoration to the Great Spirit. Three orders of being are represented by the sculptor. There is the solid earth, inanimate, insensate. Upon it stands the pony, belonging to a higher order of existence. Made of the dust of the ground, in him is life. He can adjust himself to a physical environment. Yet the beauty of the sun-set means nothing to him, nor the delicate tint of the flowers. The Indian is formed both of the dust of the earth, and of living cells like the animal. But a spark disturbs his clod. In his breast there is the push of an impulse to which the pony is an utter stranger.

He has yearnings and aspirations which reach above himself. He is aware of a relationship with the Universe. He conceives of a Great Spirit not unlike himself—stronger, wiser, eternal—to whom his heart goes out in emotions of awe, reverence, adoration. In the dark breast of this primitive man there is a sense—imperfect, indeed, but real—of a whole order of values and forces, which is as lifted above the animal upon which he is astride as the animal is elevated in the scale of being above the earth.

Modern science knows the chemical elements of the ground. She tells wonderful stories of the evolution of the horse, following his ancestors back through three millions of years. She can even describe the molecular movements in the brain of the Indian. But here science must pause. She has never been able to bridge the chasm between the molecules of the brain and a state of consciousness. The psychologist has penetrated very deeply into the nature of man, but there are some

facts of that Indian's consciousness which he cannot explain, and it does not seem probable that he ever will explain.

The impulse which leads the savage to pray and to worship a Spirit akin to himself is part of the furniture of human nature. It has maintained itself in every age and in every race. "You may find," says Plutarch, "communities without walls; without letters; without kings; without money; with no need of coinage; without acquaintance with theatres or gymnasia; but a community without holy rite, without a God, that uses not prayer; without sacrifice to win good or to avert evil—no man ever saw or will see." Religion begins in this response of man to what he conceives to be a supernatural Power or Powers, the response leads to an attitude, and the attitude results in experiences which involve the whole man—his thoughts, his emotions, his activities.

This religious impulse may be very feeble in some men, for we differ in our endowments. Some are blind to color and

others are deaf to music, and yet the religious response is seldom lacking in any human bosom. The Great Mystery surrounds us all and all have some sense of it.

Now every impulse of our nature, because it has survived in so long and so rough a journey, must serve some useful function in life. We may have within us some scrapped appendages, or organs which were once of use and have now been discarded and are carried as useless baggage, but an impulse as vital, as universal, as apparently indestructable as the religious impulse must serve some important purpose in the furtherance of life. What are the chief functions of religion? What purpose does the religious impulse and its satisfaction serve in enabling man to survive and progress?

Gilbert Murray, in his charming essay entitled *Religio Grammatici*, declares that the chief purpose of religion is to give liberty. "Man is imprisoned in the external present: and what we call a man's religion is, to a great extent, the thing

which offers him a secret and permanent means of escape from that prison, a breaking of the prison walls which leaves him standing, of course still in the present, but in a present so enlarged and enfranchised that it becomes not a prison, but a free world." Religion is the power by which men have overcome the world. From the primitive man who employed his religion to escape from fear, or bad luck, up to Jesus who said that the purpose of his mission was to give life and life more abundantly, and through all the centuries succeeding, religion has given men release from their prison, from the body of this death.

More than this, with liberty have come peace, joy, and a consciousness of power. Note the significance of this. Liberty, peace, joy, power, these are the permanent and loftiest aspirations of men. Liberty has been the banner under which the suffering ages have fought. It is the ideal toward which they have toiled. The coming of peace on the earth seems a far-

away dream. To get power and joy men search earth and heaven. Yet the men who have that quality which we recognize as religious have as an immediate possession those values which are the aspiration of the race and the noblest goal of history.

The religious mind has this instant possession because it conceives itself intersphered in Something higher than itself upon which it can repose with confidence, and from which comes spiritual vitality. This Something, greater in power and higher in worth, out of which we came and which controls our destiny, faith calls God. From this sense of God issue man's interpretations of the meaning of life and all his theologies; by it are kindled those emotions which take form in love and worship; it frames the most powerful motives in the conduct of life.

Take from the religious man his firm conviction in the existence of a great and good God who sustains him in this mortal combat, and you take all glory and worth from life, and choke the chief springs of power.

A few rare spirits could still confront a godless universe with pagan courage, striving to build up a moral civilization in the great and terrible wilderness of existence, but the vast majority of men would say "Why fight with these beasts of Ephesus, let us eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."

Is it all an illusion? The question goes to the very roots of our being. Has man projected his own image and his passionate desire upon the black and unreplying void above him, or is there, as our faith affirms, a Reality surpassing our noblest thoughts?

You and I would be untrue to our college training and to the best spirit of our age, if we did not desire above all things else to know the truth. Certainly we do not wish to live in a fool's paradise, even if it is comfortable.

"Play no tricks with thy soul, O Man
Let facts be facts and life the thing it can."

In testing the reality of religion it is well to bear in mind that the question is

not one regarding the being of a Reality which faith calls God. It needs no argument to prove that there is a vast Something, out of which we came, which influences every action of our lives, and to which at last we shall return. We are as sure of this Other as we are of our own existence. Our consciousness of self makes us aware of an Other than ourselves. The vital question is not, "Is there a God," but "What kind of a God is there? What is the nature of this Something out of which we have emerged? Is it friendly to us? Does it know anything about us? Does it care for us individually?" The religious consciousness has universally assumed that this Other is not entirely unlike us, and faith at its best affirms that God is righteous, that his purposes, slowly unfolding through the ages, are good, and those who trust in him shall not be ashamed.

Is this a true insight? Does the evidence support the conviction?

We must remember that each department of research has its own proper

method of verification. What is of worth in music and poetry is established by other means than those employed in a biological laboratory, so we must not attempt to test the validity of a declaration of faith as we would a proposition in chemistry. There is only one way to establish fundamental truths either in ethics or religion, and that is by an appeal to life. If God is found at all, he will be found in human experience; in an experience involving the whole of a man and the whole of humanity. The acid test of life, and life under all conditions,—than this there can be nothing more searching.

The following considerations have to my mind convincing weight. Man has been a long time in this world, thousands, tens of thousands of years. He is part of the universe. He is woven out of the living tissue of this system of things, and partakes of its character. His body is fashioned in the mould of nature, and his life depends upon his obedience to the forces of the physical order playing

through him and about him. The energies of the Universe have likewise built up his moral being and made him sensitive to a moral law. He is as vividly aware of the moral order as of the physical and upon equally valid evidence. Of its authority his conscience is a witness. By obeying it man achieves those ethical virtues which time has proved to be the basis of civilization and prosperity. You cannot find in literature a mind of the first class which is lacking in an instinct for the moral law—its existence, its sanctity, its commanding authority. This is the greatness of Aeschylus and Sophocles. It was the power of Moses and the prophets. By obedience to these ordinances which have their witness in every man and are the frame-work of our social organization, certain virtues have been evolved. The mills of the ages have ground but they have not destroyed them, thus indicating their conformity to the nature of things. These virtues make saints and heroes—the finest products of our humanity. This

Power out of which we came has laid down the lines along which we must advance if we would have physical well-being: it has laid the tracks along which we must move to attain the virtues which we most prize: it has also put into our being an ideal of the perfect—a vision of something better further on. These ideals of moral worth did not spring out of the dust of the earth, they did not originate in experience, they transcend it.

“In man’s self arise
August anticipations, symbols, types
Of a dim splendor ever on before.”

Working within us is the push of the Power not ourselves to participate in these ideals of supreme value. Our science is constantly changing, but there never fails a succession of poets and prophets calling upon humanity to catch the vision splendid and to move upward to the heights of virtue.

More than this, when a man seeks to coöperate with this Power that is work-

ing for righteousness, he finds that the latent energies of his nature are released. At the close of the war a Governor of one of our states, addressing the returned soldiers, used these memorable words, "We welded our selves to our duty as by fire, and there stole into our minds a supernal illumination, and into our hearts a mysterious strength." This experience is ever reproduced in all who weld themselves as by fire to duty, to truth, to beauty, to righteousness. The illumination and the mysterious strength never fail. "I considered myself," said John Milton when he threw himself into the struggle for English liberty, "a member incorporate of that truth whereof I was persuaded." When one makes such a complete dedication of himself to truth his brain grows clear, his will strong, and something of the splendor of truth descends upon him.

The long experience of man goes to show that what we call the moral virtues—righteousness and goodness in all their forms—have survival value. They con-

form to the Nature of Things. When man battles for them he is not struggling in a vacuum, he is sustained. He finds "the Friend behind phenomena" coöperating with him.

Because of this long experience his mind has been so fashioned that he cannot believe that the Supreme Power is lacking in those qualities which are of supreme worth. Shall not he who formed the conscience do right? Men make sacrifices for righteousness and truth in perfect confidence that they will prevail. Men assume, instinctively, that the universe is on the side of the moral virtues. They will not act on the contrary assumption. Because this faith lasts amid all changes and discouragements and produces great and shining characters and is fertile in honorable activities, it must be essentially true. Falsehood is not a permanent builder.

This intuitive assumption is a clear and steady conviction of the elect minds of the race. The men who have served most

faithfully and with the greatest personal devotion the cause of beauty, truth, goodness are the most certain that these values are wrought into the very constitution of the world and reflect the nature of the Eternal. Men cannot permanently think to the contrary, or act on any other supposition. The moral virtues are indispensable to the preservation of the race. Humanity can no more survive and progress without them than it can dispense with air and water.

If the Universe is not on the side of the moral ideal, then the finest and noblest minds in humanity have been the most deluded. Socrates was wrong when he said that "no evil can befall a good man either in this world or the world to come." The martyrs of every noble cause have needlessly cast away their lives. Jesus was the most foolish and deceived of all when he died on Calvary to reconcile men to a fatherly God.

We are certainly put to intellectual confusion, if philosophers and seers, who by

universal consent are regarded as the noblest exponents of our humanity, were but blind leaders; if the ideals which have been the inspiration and strength of the world do not contain that which is of permanent worth. We lesser men look up to the sovereign spirits of the race for light and power, and these elect and radiant ones who stand on the very summit of human excellence we find are all looking up—not into the void, but to a divine excellence from whence cometh their help. A conviction which lasts amid all changes and discouragements, produces the greatest characters, and is prolific in noblest activities, must be fashioned of truth. Falsehood, illusion, build neither character nor civilization. As the Power that worketh in us sustains us in our effort after truth, righteousness and goodness may we not hold the faith that it is true and righteous and friendly to our divinest aspirations?

Thus far we have spoken of God as Power. In this form he manifests him-

self in the physical world, but we are justified in thinking of him through the loftiest symbol we know, which is spirit. The Creator is not less than the noblest of his works. A fountain cannot rise higher than its source. Of the universe as we know it man is the ripest product, and what is highest in man is the best revelation we have of what is highest in the universe. When therefore we think of God through the terms of the human spirit we have taken the loftiest symbol we know. We have used our clearest, largest lens to look upon the Everlasting. He may be inconceivably more than our highest thought; he cannot be less. The term "spirit" is no more anthropomorphic than "power." And our right to use it stands the test of experimentation. When we try out our daring venture of faith we find that the rational structure of the world is not alien to our minds. In our discoveries we are but thinking God's thoughts after him. We can interpret nature because the intelligence there at work

is akin to our own. When we affirm with Jesus that "God is a Spirit" we have employed the most comprehensive symbol we possess. The Eternal is like this; not a being inferior. As Herbert Spencer has so well said: "The choice is not between a personal God and Something lower, but between a personal God and Something higher."

But it may be objected, the argument that God is righteous and good because these are forces in the world is a two edged sword. Evil and ugliness are also here, and most patent forces are they. True. But the universe is not indifferent. Two streams, it has been said, flow forth from the Everlasting. One is good and the other is evil, and we should be hopelessly puzzled as to the nature of the source of all things, did not a third stream go with them—the conviction that the good is superior to the evil. We are so constituted that we believe that the good is better both in value and power. We find that evil is self destroying, the good

is self perpetuating. "The evil that men do in their lives," said Mark Antony, "lives after them. The good is oft interred with their bones." It may seem so for a day, or a generation, but it is not true ultimately. The evil that made Rome a cesspool has been absorbed in the earth. The poetry, the oratory, the justice, the heroism of Rome are still a beneficent force. The evils which destroyed Athens have gone glimmering into oblivion; the beauty of her temples, the wisdom of her philosophers, the insight of her poets, are part of the wealth of today. "Only the virtues of the just smell sweet and blossom in their dust."

Here is a very interesting and suggestive fact of our human nature. Wherever sin abounds grace does much more abound. Let an evil be done and immediately reserves of righteous energy are released to meet and defeat the intruder and thus the world moves upward.

This brings us to what to my one mind is most persuasive evidence that the Power

which works in history is good. Samson put it dimly in his famous riddle. "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness." This world of ours is so constituted that good does come out of evil; weakness turns into strength, darkness is transmuted into light. Every sad experience of life is the raw material out of which the wise and valiant spirit of man can fashion wisdom, goodness, and moral heroism. "There is some soul of goodness in things evil," said Shakespeare, "would men observingly distil it out." This insight of our greatest poet is true, and it is true because there is the soul of goodness at the heart of our universe. The valor of the moral will of man in its struggle for perfection finds latent in the grimmest facts, and streaming through the most unpropitious circumstances, a coöperating spiritual energy by which ugliness is turned into beauty and evil becomes the instrument of good.

Let me put in a paragraph what I have said so imperfectly in this lecture. As

true men and students we joyfully accept all the results that science can establish. But science works within very definite limits. She describes processes, but she does not interpret meanings. She properly knows nothing of the ultimate things. But man has moral and emotional claims which his scientific intellect cannot satisfy. He must have unity for his thought and faith. He must build a house to shelter his spirit from the terror of the Great Mystery surrounding him. It often seems pitifully small and inadequate compared with the Vastness, yet he would found it upon a Rock.

Confronting this great and strange universe he has two distinct and profound emotions. One is that of dependence upon the Power whence he came, which shapes his destiny and which he knows in daily and most intimate experience. The other emotion is that of admiration for some thing higher than himself—for ideals of worth. The questions he wishes answered are these: "Is the Supreme Power one

with the Supreme Worth? Has it any moral character and purpose whatever? Are our most shining ideals merely emanations of our brains, or are they of interest to the Power not ourselves"? We have tried to show that this Power flows through us and through the world creating these ideals of goodness, truth, beauty, testing their validity, proving their worth, and sustaining us in our struggle to achieve them. The Supreme Power and the Supreme Worth are alike expressions of the Reality out of which we came, which shapes our natures and our destiny, which does not leave us without reinforcement in our battle for the ideal, and which our faith calls God—righteous because he formed both the moral law and the conscience that responds to it, good because he planted the dream of the perfect in our minds and helps us in our mortal battle, our Father because his thoughts are not entirely alien to our thoughts. Him we reverence because we find liberty, joy, peace and security in the secret of his presence.

Let me close by using the eloquent words of one of the most famous scientists of the last century, John Tyndall. After affirming, in his memorable Belfast Address, that man has certain "unquenchable claims of his moral and emotional nature which the understanding can never satisfy," he continues: "The world embraces not only a Newton, but a Shakespeare—not only a Boyle, but a Raphael—not only a Kant, but a Beethoven—not only a Darwin, but a Carlyle. Not in each of these, but in all, is human nature whole. They are not opposed, but supplementary—not mutually exclusive, but reconcilable. And if, unsatisfied with them all, the human mind, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, will still turn to the Mystery from which it has emerged, seeking so to fashion it as to give unity to thought and faith; so long as this is done, not only without intolerance or bigotry of any kind, but with the enlightened recognition that ultimate fixity of conception is here unattainable, and that each succeed-

ing age must be held free to fashion the mystery in accordance with its own needs—then, casting aside all the restrictions of Materialism, I would affirm this to be a field for the noblest exercise of what, in contrast with the *knowing* faculties, may be called the *creative* faculties of man. Here, however, I touch a theme too great for me to handle, but which will assuredly be handled by the loftiest minds, when you and I, like streaks of morning cloud, shall have melted into the infinite azure of the past.”

These are memorable words. The lowliest as well as the loftiest minds turn towards the Mystery for an explanation of the problems of life and for refuge from its storms, and not only minds of every country, but minds of every age. Four thousand years ago these words were written on a Babylonian tablet; “Trembling one pursued by evil, dash thyself against the bosom of thy God.” Some fifteen hundred years later this cry came out of the midst of Judah; “As the

hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" Out of the storms of the Latin civilization Augustine exclaimed: "We came forth from thee, O God, and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee." This religious impulse is universal; it is part of the nature of man. Would it have continued vital during all these milleniums of experience, if it had found no valid satisfaction? An appetite indicates that something exists to satisfy it. In a world where there is no water there would be no creature that thirsteth. Men would not hunger and thirst for God had they never experienced more than an illusion of satisfaction. Had nothing ever come from "the realms of help" through all the ages, the craving would have died out.

In associating his mind with the Eternal, man finds that which meets the needs of his moral and emotional nature; his experience is that the Everlasting Reality is concerned with those spiritual values which make our human nature

complete and glorious. Only in God does he find life's greatest questions answered.

But is Mr. Tyndall correct in claiming for science the *knowing* faculties and in intimating that the *creative* faculties, used in our loftiest moments, give us something precious, indeed, but not fairly entitled to be called knowledge? Does science have knowledge and religion only faith?

This distinction will be treated in the next lecture.

WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT
WE BELIEVE

CHAPTER III

WHAT WE KNOW AND WHAT WE BELIEVE

In discussing so vital a theme as that which now engages us we must guard ourselves against the tendency to claim too much knowledge. Sir Leslie Stephen asserted that "some theologians define the nature of the Almighty with an accuracy from which modest naturalists would shrink in describing the genesis of a black beetle." We are tiny creatures, after all, and we cannot aspire to throw the girdle of our thoughts around the Everlasting, nor speak too confidently of the ways of One whose thoughts are as far above our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. Human knowledge occupies an intermediate station between omniscience and nescience, with the probabilities favoring nearness to the lower level.

Nevertheless at the heart of religion is the firm conviction that man in his spiritual life penetrates beneath the semblance of things to Reality. He may know in part, but a part he knows; he may see through a glass darkly, but he sees.

In the days of her bigotry the church asserted infallible knowledge in many departments of interest, discrediting science as a black art, the craft of the Devil. But human nature is the same in the laboratory as in the pulpit, and many scientists today are as bigoted as was ever a medieval monk. To many of them "science is all mud and religion is all mist." What they do not know is not knowledge. So prevalent is the tendency to affirm that life in all its multitudinous activities—its moral ideals, its poetry, its soul-hunger—can be explained by a materialistic philosophy that Sir Oliver Lodge a few years ago, in a presidential address delivered before the British Association, thought fit to say to his fellow scientists: "It is my function to remind you and myself that our

studies do not exhaust the universe, and if we dogmatise in the opposite direction and say that we can reduce everything to physics and chemistry, we gibbet ourselves as ludicrously narrow pedants, and are falling short of the richness of our human birthright." It has taken the church a long time to learn that there are many ways to God, and scientists, not a few, have still to learn that the faculties and the methods they employ are not the only road to genuine knowledge. "*Uno itinere non potest pervenire ad tam grande secretum.*" "Humbug is humbug," wrote William James, "even though it bear a scientific name."

Yet many men, both in science and out of it, who are neither narrow-minded nor materialistic, are inclined to confine the word "knowledge" to the sphere of the sciences. Mr. Tyndall, in the eloquent words quoted at the end of the last lecture, while fully recognizing that poets, musicians, and saints have commerce with a world that is not the proper domain of

science, but supplementary to it, is careful to claim the knowing faculties for science, and to grant to religion insights and experiences, noble indeed, loftier in their range than those given by science, yet not strictly entitled to be designated as knowledge. He is right in the statement that fixity of conception is impossible to religion, for she deals with the Infinite. He is right in making a distinction between the faculties used in science and those used in religion. He is right in an assertion which he makes in an address on the "Scientific Use of the Imagination" that the "creative" faculties—by which he means the united action of the reason and the imagination—"lead us into a world not less real than that of the senses and of which the world of the senses is the suggestion, and to a great extent, the outcome." But is he quite justified in concealing in the adjective "creative" the fact that the intuitions of the reason lay hold of reality, and in giving to the word "know" its full significance in connection

with the report of the senses? Without the "creative" faculties "Newton never would have invented fluxions, nor Davy have decomposed the earths and alkalies, nor would Columbus have found another continent." He submerges the faith that is in science under the word "knowing" and the knowledge that is in religion under the word "creative."

Now knowledge is a very substantial word; it connotes something solid. One can build upon it, entrust his life to it, without hesitation. It is the sovereign, ultimate word in any department of thought. It is of such inestimable merit that it seems to me the scientists are trying to smuggle it into their camp under the cover of very arbitrary and plausible definitions, which they themselves make, and to leave religion something "just as good," but which does not carry with it the same confidence and power as the word "knowledge." So valuable is it that they wish the exclusive right to it.

As I have said, it is the scientists themselves who lay claim to the use of the

knowing faculties in their work. Certainly no group of experts in other fields, if asked to define the word "knowledge," would give it to science as a peculiar possession. And surely religion will never consent to have the word dwell permanently outside her domain. It has been hers from the beginning, and it is the only word that will accurately describe her experiences. One cannot imagine Jesus of Nazareth admitting: "I know Jerusalem and the mountains round about, for my eyes see them, but God and the eternal city of the spirit are the objects of faith. I know the things that are seen, but the things which are unseen I believe." He never would have assented to Tennyson's lines

"We have but faith, we may not know
For knowledge is of things we see."

On the contrary he would have affirmed that he knew God better than he knew the temple and the high priest. He would never for a moment have tolerated the idea that the senses bring us nearer Re-

ality than does the vision of the pure heart. He considered knowledge to be the sovereign reward of fidelity, giving abundance to the life that now is and beatitude to that which is hereafter.

Neither can we imagine one of the glorious succession of apostles, prophets and saints who would think of consenting to the statement that they had more certainty of what their eyes saw and their hands handled than of a Reality reported in their spiritual experience.

The church thinks of herself as founded upon a rock and not upon the shifting sands of conjecture and hope. She believes that the evidence upon which one is willing to live and die can only be truly phrased in the strongest word of which our language is capable.

We claim that the difference between the results of scientific experimentation and religious experience is not the difference between knowledge and faith, but between two different kinds of knowledge, each resting on faith, each established on

experimentation after its own kind. Science uses the perceptive and the distinctively intellectual faculties in her operations; religion assumes that the heart has reasons as well as the intellect, that conscience is a doorway into reality, that the imagination and the will are also pathways to truth. Religion employs a larger portion of human nature in the discovery of truth than does science, and she believes that she touches a wider environment.

In order to make our discussion as clear as possible, let us start with a definition of certainty and knowledge. Certainty is an assured conviction that something is so and not otherwise. It is entirely subjective and may be an illusion. Knowledge is to have assurance upon proper evidence that one's mental apprehensions agree with reality. Subjectively there is certainty, objectively there is reality; the connecting link is proper evidence that the thought tallies with the thing.

The conviction we are seeking to establish is that religious experience creates a

joyous certitude in the breasts of the faithful, the certitude of the individual is repeated in a countless multitude and issues in characters which have all the credentials of truth. These multiplied experiences, these substantial and radiant characters, constitute proper evidence that the inner conviction is not entirely alien to the outer reality. Therefore the saints as well as the scientists are able to say: "We know."

Let us ask to what degree science has knowledge. She begins with an act of faith, faith in the general trustworthiness of the sense perceptions, faith in those mental powers which go beyond sense observation into the region where things are intellectually discerned, faith in an external world that is dependable and capable of interpretation. By precise observation, experiment, and careful deduction she builds up a body of fact and truth which she calls knowledge, and rightly so. But it is knowledge of a limited kind, knowledge of phenomena and of modes of be-

havior, not of meanings, not of ultimate realities. She uses only those aspects of reality which she needs in her work. The laws of nature, as science describes them, represent, but are not identical with, the laws of nature as they really are. She takes only those serviceable features of phenomena which she can employ for her purposes. But her results are substantial enough, and constitute a body of facts and laws sufficiently valid to sustain our houses, our factories, our civilization.

But the scientist does not cover the whole of life with his method, or with his knowledge. The poet, the musician, the prophet have other fields of interest; they live in a world as real as his, a world with its actualities perceived by faculties which he does not use, but which they are confident yield valid knowledge. They deal not so much with facts as with values and forces which are spiritually discerned, which are established in confidence, not by experiment, but by experience. We are all aware of this world which is above

sense phenomena. We are as certain of the value of poetry as we are of Ford cars. The sighs of love have shaken men as perceptibly as the winds of heaven. "Before the saint," says Neitzche, "the strongest men in history have always bowed down reverently because they divine beyond his wretched appearance a superior force that will match itself against them." The spiritual energy which passes from the saint and conquers the will of the strong man is as real as the pressure of steam. A transforming power issues from the holiness of Jesus which is as indisputable as a volt of electricity. We are as sure of this realm of spiritual values and forces as of the earth beneath our feet. The power of character is as much a part of the nature of things as dynamite, and can be equally verified. Buddha, Confucius, Christ founded world civilizations, and the spiritual and moral energies they released are as truly a part of the world order as the Mississippi or the Amazon.

Spontaneously and habitually we use

the word knowledge in connection with these aesthetic and ethical experiences. Witness the forcible words which Huxley wrote to Kingsley: "The more intimately I know the lives of other men (to say nothing of my own) the more obvious it is to me that the wicked does *not* flourish nor is the righteous punished. But for this to be clear we must bear in mind what almost all forget, that the rewards of life are contingent upon obedience to the whole law—physical as well as moral—and that moral obedience will not atone for physical sin, or *vice versa*.

"The ledger of the Almighty is strictly kept, and every one of us has the balance of his operations paid over to him at the end of every moment of his existence. . . . The absolute justice of the system of things is as clear to me as any scientific fact. The gravitation of sin to sorrow is as certain as that of the earth to the sun, and more so—for experimental proof of the fact is within reach of us all—nay is before us all in our own lives, if we had but eyes to see it."

My contention is that if a distinguished scientist, as a result of long years of observation and experience, can affirm that he is as sure of the absolute justice of the system of things as he is of any scientific fact, and is more certain that sin leads to sorrow than he is of the gravitation of the earth to the sun, because it is subject to experimental proof within the reach of every one, then such certainty can be expressed only by the strongest and most dependable word in our language. It must be either knowledge or a more vigorous word. *Faith, certainty, belief, conviction* are weaker words; they are not comprehensive or vital enough for what occurs in our experience.

With the affirmation of dependable knowledge of material things and of moral facts and forces many stop and decline to go further. God is to them the Mystery whose veil no man can remove. They call themselves agnostics. They contemplate the Mystery with an awe akin to worship, but to the most important and insistent

questions which the human mind can ask they reply: "I do not know."

Yet most men are not content to leave these deep interrogations of the spirit entirely unanswered. They cannot be persuaded that man can know so much about material things and so little regarding the things which concern him most. They cannot believe that this infinitely rich universe has such abundant satisfaction for their physical needs and nothing for their deepest spiritual necessities. Therefore, with the yearning of a pilgrim for his distant home, they turn to the Mystery from which they emerged, and whose awful shadow encloses their lives, to find a refuge in the day of trouble, explanation of the meaning of life, and re-enforcement to meet the difficulties of the journey.

Men need God, they trust him, they seek to learn his will and obey him. The steps one takes in solving his religious problems are much the same as those he takes in solving his scientific problems. In science we trust our sense perceptions and

the conclusions of our intellect. In religion we trust our spiritual intuitions and the validity of the claims of our moral and emotional natures. Religious faith is our reason acting bravely in the presence of life's gravest problems. It is a valor of soul which makes us commit the highest in ourselves to what we believe is the Highest in the universe.

To give unity to our thought and faith we conceive the Supreme Power which science recognizes and the Supreme Worth which ethics knows to be manifestations of the one Reality from which all things proceed. We assume that goodness and righteousness are not human conventions, but are expressions of the character of God. And when we attempt to form some conception of the nature of the Eternal we know no better way than to do precisely what the prophets of Israel did. We interpret him by his most exalted manifestation—the spirit of a righteous and holy man. We use the highest symbol we possess to frame our thought

of the Infinite. To us the loftiest spiritual being in humanity—the being of highest worth—must be God manifest in the flesh. The glory which shines in the face of the noblest of the sons of men we take to be the raying forth of the glory of God.

To Christians the fulness of that glory is seen in Jesus Christ. Because the light which issues from his mind solves our most vital problems, because his spirit, whenever it is reproduced in men, brings the redemption which is humanity's greatest need, we believe we have found a manifestation of the Everlasting Reality. This light is the true Light, not an illusion, not a temporary flash of splendor, but the steady shining of the Ultimate Truth.

Now this faith upon which our religion is founded is as bold, as rational, and as comprehensive as any scientific generalization. Will it stand the test of experience? Can this faith prove its truth by its effects upon life?

If one man tries it out and finds that it will work, he will have an inner certitude

of its truth. He will say, "I believe." If he finds that his experience has been repeated in ten thousand times ten thousand lives which have followed the same procedure then he will exclaim, "We know!" Know, not all about God, but know God to the extent that he comes into human experience, know him as a reality because he produces real effects. For surely virtues of highest worth are not nurtured on what is entirely illusion.

This faith that the universe is friendly will certainly stand the test of experience. Mr. Tyndall gives at the close of his address upon the "Scientific Use of the Imagination" what seems to be a personal experience.

" 'Two things' said Immanuel Kant, 'fill me with awe; the starry heavens, and the sense of moral responsibility in man.' And in his hours of health and strength and sanity, when the stroke of action has ceased, and the pause of reflection has set in, the scientific investigator finds himself overshadowed by the same awe. Break-

ing contact with the hampering details of earth, it associates him with a Power, which gives fulness and tone to his existence, but which he can neither analyse nor comprehend." He cannot, indeed, analyse and comprehend the Power, but he can analyse his experience with the Power! The "fulness and tone" which come when the reflecting mind associates itself with God disclose something of his majesty and its outflowing energy. As this experience is not peculiar to Professor Tyndall, but is universal, it shows that quality which the religious man not inappropriately calls the divine grace.

When a man vitally associates himself with "that Power which alone is great" certain spiritual changes take place within him. From being, in the language of Professor James, "consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy; he becomes consciously right, superior and happy." Science can trace the process, but only religion can perform the miracle. Emerson gives a similar experience. "It is a secret which

every intellectual man quickly learns, that beyond the energy of his personal conscious intellect he is capable of a new energy (as of an intellect doubled on itself) by abandonment to the nature of things; that besides his power as an individual man, there is a great public power, upon which he can draw, by unlocking at all risks his human doors, and suffering the etherial tides to roll and circulate through him." If the beauty of the starry heavens above us, the sense of moral responsibility within us, the aspirations of our better natures towards ideals of perfection, the fulness and tone which come when the pause of reflection has set in, give us no true insight into the nature of that Power which sustains man and the universe, then what do they give us?

But religious faith sweeps farther and higher than such experiences as I have quoted. It postulates a divine benignity which cares for the individual, and works with boundless grace even through the wrath and terror of the world. Men in

vast numbers have actually ventured everything on the hypothesis that in living a life of love they were reproducing in a measure the divine nature, and they have not been put to confusion. If their faith were vain, then when they took the leap they would have fallen into vacuity, but their concurrent testimony has been that they found a Rock beneath their feet. If this faith in a divine Providence were a delusion, then the men who came under its baleful influence would have deformed and brittle characters. On the contrary theirs are the most firm-fibred and lustrous characters the world has produced. Those who have sent the roots of their being down most deeply into the faith of a divine Love have been the most revered men in history. The men who brought back the grapes of Escol may have known little about Canaan and the processes of grape culture, but they knew that there was soil in Palestine and that it was good, the lusciousness of the grapes was sufficient evidence.

Religious faith would have vanished from the world long ago, if it had put one out of joint with the Nature of Things. If no help had ever come from the Unseen, the impulse to pray would long ago have died out. The saints may be confused and confusing in their speech about religion, but with unanimity they report the same experience. Christians sing in twentieth century America psalms which were written in Asia three thousand years ago. Catholics and Protestant use the same prayers and the same hymns. Their creeds differ, but they touch the same Reality, and experience the same peace and spiritual liberty.

Reason, acting valorously on the assumption that the Soul of the Universe abundantly meets every need of the soul of man, is not duped, it obtains through experience a strong inner certainty, and this inner certainty the saint finds is not a private possession, but is shared by a great host whom no man can number. He accepts multiplied experience as proper

evidence that the inner certitude reflects a Reality and is genuine knowledge. He may not have fixity of conception, but he knows God.

I listened the other day to a cultivated man who is actually living a life of love. He is practising the incarnation. Going down into the slums, he is living among a vicious and ignorant people for the sole purpose of conforming them to Jesus Christ. By an act of faith he has committed everything he has and is to the redemptive power of love. Here is faith in a good God put to the severest test. What is the result? He has found there in the mud and scum of things spiritual strength, liberty, peace, and a strong, calm character. He has also learned in that school of tough experience that there is something divine in the most degraded men that, touched by the energies of love, will make them new creatures. After fifteen years of such work could that man be persuaded to say: "I know the dirt of these streets, but I can only affirm a faith that

love is of God." On the contrary he is more sure that through the passion of love he has found the Everlasting Strength and Mercy than he is sure of the filth of the street. The only word strong enough to express his experience is the word "know," and one looking at the granite strength and gentle sweetness of a character refined in such conditions is convinced that this manhood is not nurtured on illusions. His intellectual conceptions may be very limited, but he has drawn his nutriment from Reality.

What I wish to claim is this: Science does not have knowledge and religion simply faith. The lover, the artist, the musician know, so does the saint. Religion has always used the word "knowledge" freely and always will, because no lesser term expresses her experiences. Both science and religion begin with an act of faith. Both reach results. Those of science are sufficiently verified for a man to base his actions and his civilization upon them. Those of religion are so

tested that one can build his whole life upon them with ever increasing satisfaction both to his mind and to his soul.

There is this difference to be noted between scientific and religious knowledge. A scientific experiment may be performed in an hour and its results demonstrated, but moral and spiritual truths require centuries for their vindication. We believe in liberty so implicitly that we consider no sacrifice too great to conserve it, yet to establish beyond cavil that freedom of thought and speech is better than intellectual servitude would require the whole range of human history. In a very short time you can prove that two atoms of hydrogen will unite with one of oxygen to form water; but to validate the statement that righteousness exalteth a nation demands the experience of many generations. Yet am I more positive of the one than of the other? Shall I affirm of the former, "I know," and of the latter, "I believe"? Any such distinction would do violence to our convictions and to our habitual use of language.

Moreover, scientific knowledge is independent of the personal equation. A murderer can perform a chemical experiment as well as a saint. Religion on the other hand, is more personal. Its knowledge is conditional on character. Only the pure in heart can see God; only the unselfish and obedient can realize his love.

Our moods have much to do with all our apprehensions of spiritual values. We live on the border line of the physical and the spiritual. If we were wholly of the earth, we should never dream of the higher realities. If we were wholly spiritual, we should never doubt them. As we belong partly to the seen and partly to the unseen, vision alternates with doubt. On these conditions we hold our knowledge. The perception of ethical and religious values and forces is so vitally influenced by our moral and spiritual condition that our certitude is sometimes shadowed. The stars still shine, but the clouds cover them; God seems to forsake us and the walls of the celestial city lose

their lustre. This condition we recognize and take account of, as we do the mist which obscures the mountains, the ebb and the flow of the ocean.

As if to counter-balance this we find that religious knowledge is more intimate than scientific knowledge. The mathematician knows *about* his circles and angles; the musician knows much about music, he also knows music. The lover knows love; the saint tastes the very flavor of holiness. The scientist knows something about the forces with which he deals; the religious man knows the quality of that which he apprehends; he learns something of the nature of that which produces the emotion. Thus religious apprehension reaches nearer the heart of its object than scientific knowledge.

In another way religious knowledge is superior to scientific. Science deals with the world out there beyond us. It knows only symbols of reality which are interpreted to the consciousness through the senses. But when we deal with what

takes place in our own inner nature, we send the shaft down deeper into Reality. There, if anywhere, we surprise Reality unveiled. "By being religious," says Professor James, "we establish ourselves in the possession of Ultimate Reality at the only point at which reality has been given us to guard."

Knowledge is religion's normal word. Without it her scriptures are tame, her teachings ineffectual, and her promises pallid. "If any man willeth to do his will, he shall know of the teachings"; "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." "This is life eternal to know thee, the only living and true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent." "Every one therefore which heareth these words of mine, and doeth them, shall be likened unto a wise man, which built his house upon the rock." Religion is indeed conceived in faith, but

"The steps of faith
Fall on a seeming void, and find
The rock beneath."

These lectures have been concerned largely with our knowledge of God. I cannot close, however, without saying a word about our certitude of redemption through Christ. Most of us are willing to admit that he is the divinest spirit within our view, but his claims are staggering, and we are often sorely puzzled. Is he rightfully the Lord of our lives? Yes, for we must needs love and obey the highest when we see it. Whether he be God incarnate, or humanity realized, he commands us. We must "give the best we have to the best we know."

Can he redeem us from the power and the love of sin? The answer need not be theoretical. It is possible to put him to the most searching test. For a month try to reproduce his mind, his purpose and disposition. Give his spirit sovereign control for four weeks, and what will be the result! At the end of that experiment you will be purer in heart, stronger in will, more sympathetic in feeling. You will also be persuaded that his spirit is not

only redemptive, but is the most revolutionary power ever let loose in your life or in history. Practice this spirit for a life-time and you will exclaim at the end; "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him." Your ideas *about* him may be very imperfect, but you will *know* him and the quality of his manhood. The certitude of his redemptive power will reach to the very innermost sanctuary of your being. Horace Bushnell, one of the loftiest spiritual geniuses ever produced in this country, said after years of discipleship: "I know Jesus Christ better than I know any man in Hartford." If you will live intimately within the circle of his influence, you will both know him better than you know your neighbor, and you will have a calm assurance that the light that is in him is no will-o-the-wisp exhaled from the swamps of human superstition, but issues from the central throne of Power. You will also find how true are these words of Browning:

"I say, the acknowledgement of God in Christ
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise."

A future existence must be a matter of lofty faith, not of certitude. Jesus had little to say regarding the life hereafter. He did not argue about it, he assumed it. His purpose was to produce in men a certain quality of life which is independent of the flight of time. Truth, righteousness, goodness do not belong to the temporal order, and our Lord would have the spirit of man so incorporated into truth, goodness, righteousness, that it would be permeated with their vitality and radiance. This kind of life he called the "eternal life" because it is unrelated to temporal standards, it is fed on the Unseen. One who lives the eternal life quite naturally assumes immortality, as an architect presupposes space when he projects a building.

This belief in the future life may have originated, as many students claim, in the savage dreaming of his dead, but the

cause of its persistence does not lie in human superstition. It rests on the deep needs of our hearts and consciences. Life as we know it is so tragically fragmentary that we naturally expect its completion elsewhere. Man seems too richly endowed for the short years of his earthly life. If he is only a higher order of animal, then take from him his reason and give him a few keen instincts, take away his imagination and his ideals and put in their place some healthy appetites, and he would be far better fitted for happiness in this world. If there is nothing beyond these hills of time, the Creator has but tormented his creature by implanting conscience and a dream of the perfect. He has made man too great for his environment and therefore unhappy.

We believe, moreover, that the wages of sin is death; we cannot believe that the wages of virtue is dust. Here are two young men in battle. One in obedience to the noblest impulse within him gives his life at the call of duty; the other skulks to

a place of safety and preserves his life by faithlessness. What a topsy-turvy universe this would be if the wages of virtue is annihilation, and the wages of sin is life!

Science can neither affirm nor deny immortality, but she has opened great spaces for this faith to live in. A man trained to our modern world-vision, gazing back over the long, toilsome, costly process from the fire mist up to man, and from primitive man to our present highly organized society, cannot readily believe that he is contemplating the haphazard whirl of unintelligent forces, a riot of chance! Rather he detects an increasing purpose running through the ages, working towards man and the development of the race. Surely the unfolding purpose is prophetic of an outcome worthy of the process. If materialism is right, and humanity returns to the dust from whence it came, and the earth is at last only a burned out cinder; if the struggle of the ages, the prayers of the holy, the sacrifices of the

martyrs, the devotion of the brave, ultimate in dust and ashes, then we are put to "permanent intellectual confusion." The ages have toiled and brought forth nothing. The Eternal has blown a soap bubble, and painted it with wondrous colors at awful cost of agony to the iridescent figures, and then allowed it to burst! The wisdom, the power, the sacrificial love revealed in the long and orderly upward movement create the expectation that the culmination will be worthy of the cost.

The evolutionary hypothesis gives to this argument another turn. There was a time when the highest form of life upon the planet was a jelly-like mass, floating about in the water. It was without power of locomotion, sightless, senseless, capable only of absorbing such food particles as the primeval ocean drifted against it. But the push of nature was in it. As the centuries and milleniums passed, life acquired the power of locomotion, it developed the faculty of vision, it accumulated experiences, becoming conscious and then self

conscious; it attained the noble faculty of reason; it distinguished sensations, and choosing between them, became aware of freedom; it formed glorious ideals of a nobler self; it began to crave to be fashioned in the likeness of the Perfect Righteousness, to commune with the Infinite Goodness, and to crown all these achievements it dreamed of immortality! In this steady acquisition of riches there is a forshadowing of the future. If life in its long upward journey has acquired locomotion, sense-perception, reason, consciousness, self-determination, a feeling of moral responsibility, it is not incredible that when it thirsts for immortality the craving is a prophecy that the desire will be satisfied. This faith has

“great allies.

Its friends are exultations, agonies,
And love, and man's unconquerable mind.”

In a brief space let me sum up the argument of this lecture. The contrast between science and religion is not a contrast between knowledge and belief, but be-

tween two different kinds of knowledge. Religion can use the word "know" as legitimately as science. When we become aware of ourselves we are aware of a Power not ourselves. By coöperating with this Power we can develop characters of moral strength and spiritual beauty. Virtue and its transforming energies we know as well as we know any scientific fact, even better for we have the sure test of daily experience. Experience warrants us in affirming that God is the "Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." We take a step further. Power is an anthropomorphic term, and so is personal spirit, but the latter is more significant, it represents higher worth. God cannot be inferior to the highest symbol we use in interpreting him. God cannot be less than personal, he may be infinitely more. By faith, therefore, we think of him as a living Spirit operating through the electric framework of the world. When we seek him as the Father of our spirit in whom dwells all that we desire, we put this

belief to the searching test of life. Thus trusting and obeying we meet with those responses which change faith into an assurance which often finds even the word "know" too feeble to express the experience.

We may know the redemptive energies summed up under the name of Jesus Christ, and our deepening knowledge of him will lead to a high faith in the significance of his nature.

Science can neither affirm, nor deny a life hereafter, but if man in his long journey has made such marvelous progress, and now aspires to something further on, it is a rational faith to believe that when

"The white sail of the soul
Rounds the mystic cape,
The promontory death,"

it will move in brave adventure over the deep until it comes to a blessed country where a glorious company look upon the very face of God.

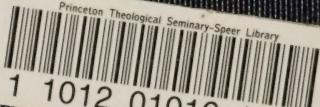
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